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Grandma Bright's Q.P.s



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Edith
1912



Grandma Bright's Q. P's.



★ R. R. Bowker

Grandma Bright's Q. P's.

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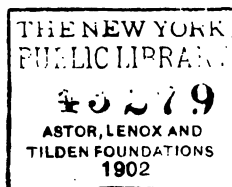
MISS S. O'H. DICKSON,

Author of "Howard McPhlenn," "Guessing at Heroes," "Chestnut Wood
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*To the Boys and Girls
Of the Southern Presbyterian Church.*

CONTENTS.

| | PAGE. |
|-------------------------|-------|
| CHAPTER I., | 9 |
| CHAPTER II., | 21 |
| CHAPTER III., | 33 |
| CHAPTER IV., | 45 |
| CHAPTER V, | 57 |
| CHAPTER VI., | 68 |
| CHAPTER VII., | 78 |
| CHAPTER VIII.,. | 89 |
| CHAPTER IX., | 99 |

Grandma Bright's Q. P's.

CHAPTER I.

THOSE who have read *Guessing at Heroes* will remember Grandma Bright, and what jolly evenings the Allen children used to spend in her room, playing her game of heroes, and ending the evening with treats of apples, and nuts, and chocolate caramels, with delightful surprises of all kinds thrown in. And so, perhaps, they will not object to going to Grandma's room again with the Allen and Barker children, who have all grown older, of course, since we last met them.

Hugh and Jack, and Will Barker are in long trousers, and have put on standing collars, and really look very grown up—for you know that

is the compensation boys have for the misery of wearing stiff linen collars.

Nellie Barker is taller, too, and dear little Artie not only pronounces his Rs and Ss, but is rejoicing in knee-pants instead of his pretty kilts, and does not seem to mind looking like a Brownie one bit. Grandma grieves over the change, but grandmas are such old fogies, you know!

One night Mama Allen said, "Mother Bright, the children used to enjoy those Friday night guessing frolics so much, that I wish you would start them again. I would so much rather have them with you than going around the neighborhood and getting up frolics by themselves."

Grandma Bright was older, too, and did not get about so nimbly, but she was as young as ever in her feelings, bless her dear old heart! and so she said quickly, "All right, daughter; but I think I will put on my think cap, as Artie says, and try to find something new."

Accordingly, when the bell announced supper, she went to the table with a funny little white paper cap on her head.

The children were all at the table, and as soon as they spied the cap all laughed and clapped their hands.

"Gra'mma, you've got on your 'think cap,'" cried Artie, jumping up from his seat and clapping his hands with delight as he ran about the room. "And that means somethin' nice for us child'en."

Grandma tried to look very grave and important, but Jack laughed and said, "Oh, grandma, your eyes always laugh, no matter how solemn you look."

"Well!" — grandma cleared her throat and then said, "Well, you see this think cap has been on for a whole half hour, and there are such lots of little thoughts under it that I'm sure I'll spill them if I laugh."

"Ha! ha! ha! ha!" burst from all the children's mouths.

"Spill 'em, gr'amma! spill 'em quick," cried Artie, climbing on the back of her chair and trying to hug her.

"Yes! yes!" everybody said, and that included papa and Mama Allen.

"Yes, let's have the thoughts, especially if they are about any fun."

"Well, children, your mother says that she used to like those jolly evenings when we had the Guess Club meetings, and she wishes we could have them again, but—"

"Oh! grandma, let's have them! let's have them!" interrupted the children altogether.

"But," grandma continued solemnly, "when big boys wear trousers and standing collars, and small boys wear knee pants, maybe they will not want to spend evenings guessing, and—"

"Eatin' caramels, and goobers, and things," halloed Artie, whereupon papa and mama led the laugh, and grandma laughed too.

"Now, I suppose we might have those even-

ings again, provided"—here she talked very slowly, "provided I am sure to invite the chocolate caramels, and apples, and other friends of the family."

"Yes! yes!" There was a semi-chorus of yeses.

"Well, now, listen. Under my think cap I found a splendid idea. We will have a Q. P. every Friday evening."

The children's faces were all aglow with pleasure, and they nodded their heads and clapped their hands in approval.

"But what's a Q. P., grandma? You are so funny," said Artie, patting grandma's hand affectionately. She petted back, and then said:

"Children, you all think you are good Presbyterians; but what do you know about your church, or your grand Catechism, or the noble Presbyterian men and women, some of them gladly dying as martyrs for the cause of Christ?"

Grandma's eyes were flashing, and her color as bright as a girl's.

But it was too funny to see the children's faces. Grandma laughed until the tears came.

"Why, grandma!" exclaimed Hugh, in a shocked tone, "are you goin' to teach a Sunday-school on Friday nights for a frolic?" Hugh's tone was quite sarcastic before he finished.

"Mercy me, grandma, what you goin' to make us do? What is Q. P., now?" asked Artie, eagerly.

Jack said nothing, but whistled one of his long whistles that meant about a dozen things.

"Well," said grandma, wiping her eyes, "this does look rather like a funeral occasion, but if you will only wait a few minutes, I believe I'll see the sunshine in your faces again."

The clouds began to lift from their faces right away, for nothing could shake their faith in grandma.

"Now, listen! I want to have Question Par-

ties every Friday evening. To-morrow, of course, there will be none; but I will explain what I am going to do, give out the questions for next time, and then—”

“Apples and caramels,” called out Artie in a relieved tone. Grandma would have laughed at him if she had dared, but the cloud was pretty dark on his face, even then, and clouds bring rain sometimes, you know, and grandma did not like tear rains, so she nodded and smiled, and then said, “These questions will be about the things good Presbyterian boys and girls ought to know, and also about some things they ought to know, whether they are Presbyterians or not.”

“But how will we find out the answers?” asked Hugh, still somewhat disturbed in his mind.

“Why, of course we grown people will tell you where to look for them. And we will have a prize, as I did for the club that guessed at he-

rees, and the same kind of end to our evenings as the Guess Club had."

"All in favor of having a question party to-morrow night raise the right hand."

Poor little Artie must have had rheumatism or some other complaint in his right hand, for he could not get it even as high as his shoulder.

"Why, little man, what's the matter with your hand?"

Artie's head drooped, and in a very subdued voice he said, "That's too hard for me. I don't b'lieve I can do it."

"What! Can't help us entertain the apples and nuts and caramels? What a pity."

That made Artie laugh, and he jumped up from his little chair, and throwing his arms around grandma's neck, he almost choked her, and then, raising his hand as high above his head as he could get it, he said, "Me too! Me too! Course I'll come. I want to be a good Pres'te-yan too."

There was a burst of laughter from the others, because Artie could not pronounce everything yet, but grandma rapped on the table and said, "Children!" in such a voice that it soon put an end to that fun.

"Now, before we stop talking about that question party, I want to say that it is only too true that a great many little Presbyterians, and big young Presbyterians, and too many old Presbyterians, are shamefully ignorant about their church, and their glorious history and Catechism. I am ashamed of them and of myself, and I want to see if we cannot turn over a new leaf here, and may be we can get others to do the same."

They were still in the dining-room, and grandma looked at the clock and said, "Why, we ought to be in my room by this time. Who will escort me?" The boys were all three ready to fight for the honor, but grandma chose Artie, and sent Hugh to open the door and see if the

lamp was lighted, and Jack to see if Willie and Nellie could spare time from their lessons to come for an hour.

The room looked very much as it did when we were there last, excepting that grandma had a great big arm-chair, the children's Christmas gift to her the year before, and when she took her seat in it, the soft crimson velvet cushions made a lovely background for her beautiful white hair and soft lace cap.

A rush in the hall, a burst open of the door, and Jack and Will and Nellie came in, rosy and quite out of breath.

"Oh! grandma," asked timid Nellie, "do you think I can ever answer these questions? Jack says he believes they will be hard to find!"

"Nonsense! and what if they are? They will be worth finding, and now let the question party alone for a while, and let's see if I can't get that curious 'Q. P.' taste out of your mouths. Artie, I wish you'd take this lump from the back of my

chair," grandma groaned, as if she was very uncomfortable.

Artie slipped his hand under the cushion and pulled out a box of candy! Then grandma gave a kick and sent a big red apple rolling across the floor!

"Mercy!" she exclaimed, as if very surprised. "Where did that come from? Look under my chair, Hugh, and see." And Hugh drew out a waiter of apples and nuts.

Artie—always the impulsive, loving one—seated himself on the arm of the chair, and squeezed grandma till the "think cap" came rolling off.

"Oh! oh! grandma! You always was the greatest grandma out!"

Then they all said, "Yes." And then how the nut shells snapped, and teeth worked on apples and candy, and eyes sparkled, and the clouds that the dreaded "Q. P." had brought were all gone.

Mama Allen looked in about half-past eight and called out, "I move this meeting adjourn till to-morrow night, or somebody will be kept in at school to-morrow."

That scattered the crowd, and dear old grandma went to bed with a happy heart.

CHAPTER II.

FRIDAY afternoon five or six boys of the neighborhood were gathered in the Allens' back yard. They were what grandma called the "L. T's." Grandma did love to give curious names to the children, and to make them guess awhile before she told what they meant. L. T. just stood for long trousers—that was all! This whole set of boys had just put them on that fall, and "of course," grandma said, "the important event must be celebrated some way," and so she had given them this name.

The boys were tired of their ball game, and were sitting about on the steps and railings, wherever they could find seats.

Now, grandma's back window overlooked this porch, so she could hear what they were saying.

"Say, Grey," said Jack, "don't you want to

come to grandma's Q. P. to-night? She told us that we could invite other boys besides Will Barker."

"Q. P. What does that mean?" asked Grey, laughing.

"Oh! guess; Grey, guess!" cried Will Barker. "It's so easy, and I tell you, boys, we do have lots of fun in Grandma Bright's room. She's just great!"

"Great grandma, is she? Ha! ha! ha!"

Everybody laughed, of course, and thought Mason had said a smart thing.

"Well, anyhow, what does Q. P. stand for?"

"Quilting party?"

"No."

"Quizzing party?"

"No."

"Queer party?"

"No."

Artie was greatly excited, and danced around crying, "I know! I know!"

"Yes, but don't tell yet," cried Hugh. "Let them have one more guess. You guess Mason."

"Curious party?" said Mason. Then everybody clapped.

"Oh! ha! ha! Spelling curious with a Q," said Jack.

Now, Jack was not noted as a fine speller, and may be that was why he laughed at Mason; but Mason said quickly, "You can't see that a fellow's funning, Jack Allen. Don't you 'spose I know how to spell as good as you? I just said that for fun."

"Boys, you give up?" asked Hugh. Artie was nearly bursting to tell, and as the boys' heads began to nod for yes, he fairly shouted, "Question! Question party!"

"What are the questions about?" somebody asked.

"Well, you see, grandma says we don't know enough about our church and our catechism, and she wants us to be intelligent Presbyterians."

There was silence for a minute, and grandma knew that a shadow had fallen on the company. But Hugh came manfully out in favor of grandma's Q. P.'s.

"It sounds like Sunday-school, I know," he said, "but gramma always makes everything jolly and nice. You come to-night and see for yourselves. This is the first night, and we won't have to answer any questions, just to get some for next time, and then have a big frolic afterwards."

"Whew! I smell candy," said Jack. "Me, too! me too! an' I bet I know what 'tis," exclaimed Artie. "Candy for to-night, that's what." And he clapped his hands joyfully.

By this time two of the boys, Grey and Mason, began to think it would be worth coming to see how Grandma Bright could make a frolic out of a Q. P. on the Presbyterian Church and Shorter Catechism. They had always thought these things had to be put away with their Sunday

clothes, and were never to see daylight in the week.

Poor boys, but they didn't know Grandma Bright very well, nor did they know how many interesting things could be found that Presbyterian boys and girls ought to know, but do not. And when we say this, we do not mean to find fault with their Sunday-school teachers. No, indeed, we pity them too much. They do try, many of them, to be faithful; but you know it takes two to make any kind of a bargain.

Well, when quarter of seven o'clock came that evening, the bell rang, and in came Grey and Mason with Will Barker. The new members of grandma's club were rather shy and scared at first.

"Where's Nellie, Will?" asked Mrs. Allen.

"Oh! she's waiting for Sadie and Lula. They said they were coming."

"Well, I hope they will be prompt, because you know this is a N. O. club, as well as a Q. P."

Mrs. Allen laughed as she said this.

"What's that now, mamma? N. O.? You and grandma just try to find queer things to say."

"While you're waiting for the girls, suppose you put your heads together and guess what N. O. stands for, and I will see if Mother Bright is ready for you."

The boys thought it would be very funny to take Mama Allen's suggestion literally, so they proceeded to bump heads together, which very soon produced a row, and Mrs. Allen came back in a hurry and said, "Mercy me! What's all this row about?"

"We were just doin' what you said—puttin' our heads together."

"You silly things, I bet that you haven't guessed my riddle."

"No, Mrs. Allen, we can't guess. Please tell us."

"Well, N stands for nine, doesn't it?"

"Oh! oh! nine o'clock! Nine o'clock!" they all exclaimed at once.

Just then grandma's whistle sounded so loud that they could hear it above their chattering, and they all started to the door.

"Stop! stop!" called Mrs. Allen. "One of Mother Bright's mottoes is, 'Let all things be done decently and in order.' Hugh, you escort Mason, and Jack take Grey. Willie and Artie follow, and I will bring up in the rear."

Ting! ting! sounded the door-bell, and just in time to join the procession came Nellie Barker and her two friends, Sadie and Lula.

Grandma's room looked lovely. She had a way of bringing out all sorts of pretty things on Friday nights, and there were red pillows and blue pillows, and scarfs, and then that pretty screen. How the children loved it for the pleasant surprises that it had hidden from time to time.

Grandma knocked on the table as soon as the visitors had shaken hands.

"Now, Grey and Mason, and you, Sadie and Lula, I want to ask you first what you think of my Q. P.'s?"

Mason's brown eye twinkled with mischief, and may be he would have said something funny, but he was just a little awed by two grown people and three girls all in one room, and so he just rolled up his handkerchief in a tight ball and laughed.

Grey said, "that's what we came to find out."

"Well, if you begin right you will all enjoy them, and find out a great deal."

"What you mean by beginning right, grandma?" asked Hugh.

"Why, begin by really wanting to know the things you don't know, and by taking it as a real pleasure to look up the answers to the questions. I will not give you one that you cannot find in either one of two books that ought to be in the

library of every Presbyterian, and worth a whole dozen of historical novels. I have been re-reading them lately, and have found some beautiful stories."

The same rules will apply in the Q. Ps that we had in the Guess Club. Each one must search for himself, and at the end of three months I will give a prize to the one who answers most questions correctly. The books I speak of are "The People's History of Presbyterianism" and "Addresses at Westminster Assembly Celebration." *

"And now we'll have some nuts to open. Hugh, will you hand that waiter round?" Grandma pointed to a table over in the corner where there was a waiter holding just ten English walnuts tied round with a ribbon of grandma's color—purple.

* This was before that splendid book, *The Creed of Presbyterians*, had been published or Grandma would surely have included it.

Everybody's eyes were asking questions then.

"Help yourself," grandma said. "Each take a nut."

Will wondered if grandma really thought a boy could be satisfied with one English walnut, but he soon knew better.

"Must we untie the ribbon?" asked Nellie Barker timidly, but before grandma could answer Artie had pulled open his nut, and there was nothing inside but a little roll of paper. He guessed right away as he unrolled it, and saw the writing. "Questions! questions! I bet. What funny nuts grow for gramma!"

And, sure enough, that was the way grandma had given each one a question. While they were reading them the door opened, and Mrs. Allen came in bringing a big waiter of "sure enough" nuts and apples and raisins and candy, and how they cracked nuts and ate and laughed and talked, and dear old grandma just leaned back in her chair and beamed on them like the sun.

But when the hands of the clock pointed to ten minutes of nine, she rapped for silence, and said:

"Now, don't lose your questions, for that will count against you. Get the books either from your home folks or the Sunday-school library, or come to me for mine. Find the answers and write them down, so that you will have them ready next Friday."

While she was talking a small whistle sounded out in the hall, nine times, and everybody laughed, and somebody said, "Oh! that's the N. O. whistle, I guess," and grandma smiled and nodded her head.

"Oh! this was fine, grandma," said Mason; "may we come again?"

"Can we join the Q. P.?" several asked, and be sure Grandma Bright said yes. Then she added, with a grave face, "But, boys, keep on; don't get tired, and some day you will be glad indeed that you joined the Q. P."

The questions grandma gave out were:

1. (Will) "What does Presbyterianism mean?"
2. (Jack) "About how old is the Presbyterian form of government?"
3. (Artie) "How many members are there in the great family of Presbyterian churches?"
4. (Grey) "What two kept the simple faith and shone like stars in the dark ages?"
5. (Mason) "What were the Waldenses called three hundred years before the Reformation of Calvin and Luther?"
6. (Nellie) "Who were the Waldenses, and where did they live?"
7. (Sadie) "Why do the Waldenses object to being called 'Reformed'?"
8. (Lula) "When was the first effort made to destroy the Waldenses?"
9. (Hugh) "Who persecuted them in 1545?"
10. (Mrs. Allen) "What other years were marked by the persecution of Waldenses?"

CHAPTER III.

WHEN the next Friday evening came, grandma was delighted to find that every one of the children had some kind of answer to the questions.

Papa Allen had said he was afraid the questions were too hard, and would scare the children away, but grandma had more faith in the young folks, and she said :

“No, no son, don’t talk that way. You come in Friday evening and see how I am going to try to make these question parties entertaining as well as instructive.

So papa and Mama Allen both walked into the room soon after the children had gathered, and after awhile here came Mr. and Mrs. Barker too.

Grandma laughed, and said she believed they were all afraid that the poor boys and girls were going to have brain fever.

"Oh, no," said Mrs. Barker, "you said that some big Presbyterians did not know all they ought to know, and we big Presbyterians have come to learn."

Grandma now rapped for order, and then she took the little book in which her questions were written down, and began:

"No. 1. Who will tell me what Presbyterian means?"

Will Barker had that, and he looked as frightened as if he was going to speak at commencement, but plucked up courage and said, "That's in the dictionary, gramma. Presbyterian means 'one who belongs to a church that is governed by presbyters,' and presbyter means elder."

"Very good," said grandma, "and of course you know that we have two kinds of elders: one that preaches, and the other kind that keeps us straight and visits the sick and prays with and for the people."

When grandma said this, Papa Allen looked

up at the ceiling so funnily that Artie laughed quite heartily. When Papa Allen was funny he was so very funny.

"No. 2," called grandma, "who got that? About how old is Presbyterianism?"

"I did," answered Jack, "and, gramma, that book says that the Israelites had elders in the time of Moses. If they did that, they must have been Presbyterians. So Moses was a Presbyterian. Isn't that nice?"

Everybody laughed, because Jack was a great admirer of Moses already, and if he was a Presbyterian, why, he was just that much nicer in Jack's estimation.

Papa Allen held up his hand here, and grandma said, "Well, son, what is it?"

"Give us your authority for saying that the Israelites were Presbyterians, or, at least, in letting Jack say so?"

"Well, if the Israelites were governed by elders, and the Presbyterians are governed by

elders, they must be both Presbyterians. Doesn't that seem clear to you, Mr. Honorary?"

"Oh! oh!" said Mr. Allen, looking very profound and very convinced.

While the grown folks were smiling over this, grandma rapped and asked for the answer to No. 3, "How many members are there in the great family of Presbyterian churches?"

Artie looked very important, because that was his question. He was sitting by his mother, with his head against her knee, but straightened up and said, "There are about sixty-five. And that means about sixty-five that believe all that we believe, and govern their churches most like we do; but they're not pezactly like us, but are kin to us,—eh! mama, isn't that what you said?"

"Yes, dear, that is a very good answer to come from a six-year-old boy, even if the L. T.'s do laugh. I wonder if any one can mention the names of some of our kin?"

Mr. Barker's hand was up this time, and grandma nodded and smiled, and he said, "The Waldenses, the German and Dutch Reformed, the Congregational, and the Welsh Methodists and the Baptists, and lots of others that don't have bishops."

"My oh!" exclaimed Jack, "We've got lots of Presbyterian kin. I didn't know we belonged to such a big family, gramma!"

Question 4 comes now: "What two churches kept the simple faith and shone like stars during the dark ages?"

Grey answered promptly, "The Culdee and the Waldenses."

"Will somebody tell us something about the Culdee church?"

Mrs. Barker said, "The Culdee church had its home in the little island of Iona, off the west coast of Scotland. It is supposed that some missionaries from Asia Minor—may be disciples of John—introduced Christianity, and St. Co-

lumba, a great and good man, made it the headquarters for his missionary work for the islands and for Scotland. Every one of us ought to read the *Story of the Culdee Church*, told so beautifully by Dr. T. V. Moore, of Virginia."

"And now," who were the Waldenses," asked grandma, "and where did they live?"

Nellie had that question, and she was so interested in the story of the Waldenses that she forgot her timidity.

"Oh, Gramma Bright, they lived in some of those beautiful little valleys in the high mountains of Northwestern Italy. The people have to carry earth up in baskets to some of the terraces, where they plant their grapes, for the country is so rocky they can't get their vines to grow in any other way. They loved God and the Bible and their simple faith so much, they were willing to die rather than give up their faith, and thousands of them did die dreadful deaths; but they are not persecuted now.

"Sometimes they had to hide in caves, and live there a long while. And when their Bibles were burned, so many children and grown people had memorized different parts, that in every neighborhood there might be found those who could say the whole Bible."

That was a long speech for Nellie, and her mama was very proud of her timid girl's courage.

"Now, I'll ask Question 5. We want to know more about these interesting kinfolks, especially as some of us may know some of them personally."

At first, some of the children stared at grandma, when she talked about knowing people personally that had lived hundreds of years ago, but Hugh and Mason remembered something they had heard, and so they understood. Question 5 is, "What were the Waldenses called three hundred years before the Reformation of Calvin and Luther?"

Mason answered promptly, though he was a good deal embarrassed at first, "The Roman Catholic writers as far back as 1250, described the Waldenses as the most ancient of all heretics."

"Yes, and they could not tell how or when they began to be heretics," added grandma.

"Gramma, what's heretics?" asked Artie, with a little frown on his sweet brow.

"That's right, boy! ask about things you don't understand. These question parties are for all of us. I don't want to be the only questioner," said grandma. "Different people fit different meanings to the word. The Roman Catholics called the Waldenses heretics because they would not believe as they (the Roman Catholics) believed about religion.

"And now, some one tell me why the Waldenses object to being called Reformed?" Grandma looked over the tops of her glasses at everybody. Then Sadie, who had never met

with the Guess Club, said in a low voice, because she was frightened, "They said they had never been deformed. They were satisfied with their own simple religion."

"Yes, and I hope that we Presbyterians will follow their example, and be satisfied with our old-time religion."

"When was the first effort made to persecute them?"

Lula spoke quickly: "In 1209, three hundred and fifty years before the first General Assembly met in Scotland, Emperor Otho gave permission to destroy them."

"Who persecuted them in 1545?"

That was Hugh's question, and he answered, "They were persecuted before that, gramma. In 1238 and in 1338, and in the last year two hundred and thirty were burned at one time. A century later three thousand were smothered in a cave; and in 1545 twenty-two villages were burned and twenty thousand people killed; but

that did not change the faith of those who lived."

"Now, for the last question about the Waldenses. 'What other years were marked by the persecution of these noble people?' "

Mrs. Allen said, "I will answer that, Mother Bright, as everybody else has been heard from but me."

"In 1560, and again in 1655. In this year the cruelty to them was greater than ever, and massacres too dreadful to be described took place. Then, in 1686, the Duke of Savoy sent an army to fight them, and they were defeated and thousands were sent away to other lands. One good thing that Napoleon Bonaparte did was to befriend them.

"They suffered again after his downfall, but were never again so persecuted; and their descendants now are a living monument to God's truth and to his faithfulness. No wonder then, chil-

dren, that grandma has so many questions about our Waldensian kinfolks."

"Now," said grandma, "the Q. P. is over for this evening. Next Friday I will change the programme somewhat. I want somebody to recite Whittier's beautiful poem, *The Vaudois Missionary*.

"Some one else, big or little, tell us the story of John Huss, and then I will expect each one to mention the name of some one who had to do with the upbuilding of our great Presbyterian Church."

While grandma was talking, Mr. and Mrs. Allen had gone out. The children thought they were tired of the Q. P., but in a few moments something like a horn sounded in the hall, grandma smiled, and the children all straightened up and looked, and here came Mr. Allen, calling out, "Twenty minutes for refreshments! Presbyterian nuts and candies and fruits! Real

Scotch cakes!" And he had a great big dinner tray, full of all kinds of nice things!

And what a clatter there was! After Mr. Allen set the tray down, he and Mr. Barker put their hands to their ears and shut their eyes and started out, but they both seized a handful as they went!

CHAPTER IV.

THE first heavy snow of the season was falling on the next Friday evening, and over at Mrs. Barker's, Nellie was sitting disconsolately by the window watching the innocent snowflakes that must have been surprised that even one girl existed who was not glad to see them; but Nellie had a cold, and grip was in town, and—well, everybody knows what that means.

She had not even dared to ask yet whether she could go to the Q. P., for Nellie was one of those girls who prefer suspense to a positive “no.”

But, just before supper, in came Jack, like a young whirlwind, and he handed Mrs. Barker a note.

He was all out of breath, but managed to gasp, “Read—it!” which, by the way, was a very un-

necessary remark, for of course Mrs. Barker expected to read it. It was from grandma :

Dear Mrs. Honorary,
Don't disappoint me
About the Q. P. ;
But bundle Nell up
As soon as you sup,
And we'll have a fine time
Without further rhyme.
No more from Grandma
To Nell's Ma and Pa.

"Dear old Grandma Bright," said Mrs. Barker, as she folded the note again, "she will never grow old."

So, after a short consultation with Papa Barker, Nellie was bundled up, and picked up and "toted" across to the Allens'.

All the others were there, and the room was so cozy and warm that it was hard to believe that there was a gloomy sky and bitter winds outside.

Grandma had a paper in her hand, tied with a bow of purple ribbon, and as soon as she had

"called the meeting to order," she said, "We have a fine programme for our entertainment, ladies and gentlemen," and she unrolled the programme.

Here Artie, who was always ready to applaud anything grandma said, clapped loudly, then everybody followed, and the applause continued until grandma rapped for silence.

"If my very appreciative audience will keep still I will read it."

Artie laughed. He did not know what appreciative meant, and thought it must be something funny. That is the way with a good many young people besides Artie.

Grandma knew he didn't mean any harm, though, so she patted him on the shoulder and read:

"Song by all of us, led by Mrs. Honorary Allen.

"Story of John Huss, by Mr. Honorary Barker.

"Song and chorus by Master Artie Allen and all of us."

There was a loud laugh from Jack when grandma read this. He couldn't help laughing at and teasing Artie, but he was promptly silenced, and grandma continued:

"Recitation, by Miss Nellie Barker, *The Vau-
dois Missionary*."

"Names of famous Presbyterians."

"Exhibition of photographs and souvenirs, by Mr. Honorary Barker."

"Song, by all of us."

"Now, I hope you are all as pleased as I am with my programme," said grandma, as she laid it on her lap.

Several voices called out, "It's fine, gramma!" and Artie added, "Of course it is. It's gramma's."

"Come, children," called Mrs. Allen, who had a song-book in her hand, and they all stood and sang that quaint little song, "Jesus Bids Us Shine."

Then, when the sweet young voices were hushed, Mr. Barker put on his glasses and read *The Story of John Huss*.

No one can ever be sure what a boy may become. Probably no one thought when the little boy, of whom we are to hear, was born in the little market town of Hussinecs, at the foot of the Bohmerwald Mountains, in Bohemia, that some day he would be known all over the Protestant world as one of the most famous reformers, or that he would be burnt at the stake rather than renounce his faith.

I guess that he played around and went to school like other boys. His parents were well-to-do peasants—which, of course, we all know means small farmers and land-owners. So, when he had finished school at home, he went to the University at Prague.

He was a bright boy and a good student, and when he was twenty-four years old he received the degree of B. A., and, soon after, he began to

lecture and preach, for he had been educated for the Catholic priesthood.

He began to study the Bible carefully for himself, and was brave enough to let people know that he did not believe all that his church required people to believe.

Then the other priests began to be scared, for fear he would persuade others to believe with him, and so they told the archbishop, and he forbade him to preach and sent him away. He went away, but he did not stop preaching, because he could not, for God meant him to help on the great religious reformation.

"What is a reformation, Hugh?" asked Mr. Barker, suddenly.

Of course Hugh knew—a boy thirteen years old, and he was so surprised, you know.

"A reformation—why, it's a reformation!"

Everybody laughed, Hugh included, but grandma quickly said, "It is easier to ask somebody else than to answer questions sometimes. What's it, yourself, Mr. Honorary?"

Mr. Barker scratched his head for a moment, and then said, "Well'm, it means here that great revival that made good men in the Roman Catholic Church believe more in the Bible, and in Jesus Christ as the Saviour of men."

Well, after they had sent John Huss away they sent for him to come back to consult them, and promised to protect him. But in spite of that they arrested him and put him in prison, and, after trying him, they condemned him to be burned.

He was brave and true to the last, and, after he was tied to the stake and wood piled all around him, he said, "In the truth of the gospel which I have written, taught and preached, I joyfully die."

The fire was then kindled, and his noble soul went up to God in the flames. So died one of the noblest of the reformers and bravest of martyrs.

The boys and girls looked very sober at the

thought of the dreadful death that John Huss died, and Jack said, "Well, grandma, I'm glad I didn't live in those times."

"Yes, boy, that is so," replied grandma, shaking her head. "A good many pennies ought to be dropped into our thanks boxes for that. Now we are to have a song, 'Scatter the Sunshine,' by Master Artie, with chorus by all of us."

Artie's bright face wore a deep flush, but when mama started him he sang very sweetly the song he loved so well, and when they all joined in the chorus grandma thought the music was as good as any New York or Boston glee club could give.

The Vaudois Missionary—Recitation by Miss Nellie Barker.

This beautiful poem was so well recited that it brought tears to the eyes of more than one who heard it, and grandma was very proud of having selected Nellie to do it.

Grandma's criticism on it afterwards was:

"The child recited it as if she felt it, not as if she had been taught to recite it by rule."

"Now, please some one mention the name of some of the famous men who have helped to build up the church that we all love so well."

Papa Allen's hand was up, and so was Grey's, and Mason's, and Hugh's, all at once.

"Age before beauty," said grandma, as she bowed to Papa Allen, and he said at once, "John Calvin, born in Noyon, France, in July, 1509."

"Now, Mason, who can you mention?"

"John Knox, born in Scotland in 1505. Standing by his grave, the regent said, 'Here lieth one who never feared the face of man.'"

"Good!" said grandma, "and you, Grey?"

"Patrick Hamilton," answered Grey. "He was a cousin of James V., and was burned at the stake when only twenty-four years old, and accomplished more by his death than he could have done by his life, for it set the nation to asking why he died."

"Alexander Henderson, who was one of the commissioners to the General Assembly that gave us our Catechism."

"Yes," said Sadie, "and Samuel Rutherford was another, and my papa said he wrote a book that everybody read in those days. I believe I have forgotten the name."

Lula's hand was up now, and grandma nodded to her.

"George Gillespie. He was the young minister whose prayer helped the committee who were preparing the Catechism to make the answer to the question, 'What is God?' "

"Very good, very good," said grandma, and she kept on nodding her head, because she was so pleased.

"Now, Mr. Barker, I believe you have some photographs and other souvenirs to show."

The children all began to be wide awake now, and Mr. Barker opened a pretty album of pressed flowers. One was an eidelweiss from

some of the high mountains that shut in the home of the Waldenses. Another was a bunch of grass from the grave of Calvin, in Geneva. And there were many from interesting places in Scotland.

After they had looked at, learned much about the fine photographs, they sang grandma's favorite hymn, "True-Hearted, Whole-Hearted." And when they had finished singing it grandma said, "Son, I wish you would move that screen away. There seems to be something behind it."

Mr. Allen moved the screen, and there was a large, round table filled with bundles, all tied up and labelled.

"Bless my heart!" he exclaimed, as he picked one up and looked at it first one way and then another.

After he had put on his glasses and made a great deal of fuss, and while they were all beginning to gather about the table, Artie clapped

his hands and said, "There's my name! and there's mama's!"

Sure enough, there was a bundle addressed to each one, and a little strip of paper under each string. The stripes of paper contained the questions for next time, and the bundles were filled with candy, and while they were finding that out, in came Mrs. Barker and Mrs. Allen with waiters filled with saucers of snow cream.

"My, my!" said grandma. "I do not care to have such a shivery ending to our interesting evening—but go ahead children. I used to be silly enough to do it too. I have been young myself."

Then Mr. Barker pulled a small bell out of his pocket and rang it—and everybody kissed grandma good-night and thanked her for another Q. P.

CHAPTER V.

“WHAT’S the use of grip, anyhow, mama?” The tone in which poor little Artie asked this question was so despairingly doleful that Mrs. Allen felt obliged to laugh before she could satisfy the poor child’s desire for knowledge, if that really prompted his question.

For Artie was just getting over his fight with this very fashionable visitor, who seizes victims right and left, and doesn’t even spare such people as Grandma Bright.

When the Friday evening came that followed the programme evening, as grandma called it, she was just sitting up, and had “no more strength than a kitten,” she said. Besides, there was some one sick in the house of every member of the Q. P., and so Papa Allen had posted a funny little white flag on the handle of the front

door, and on it had written first, in big letters, "Grip!" Then underneath, "Q. P.'s postponed till further notice.

"By order of the President."

In reply to Artie's doleful question, Mrs. Allen had given him a hug, and had laughed as merrily as if she had not the first sneezing warning that her own turn was coming.

"Are you trying to get up a Q. P. all by yourself, poor boy?"

"No, mama, I want to know really, truly. There must be some use for grip, or it wouldn't come to everybody, specially gramma."

"Well, dear, as to grandma, I can see the use of grandma having it better than I can why the rest of us do, for she has been so cheerful, and has taken her medicine so faithfully and without any fuss, that she has helped us all to see how pleasant even sick people can be. Don't you think so?"

"Yes'm, I weckon so," answered Artie, but in a very uncomforted tone. Then he remembered something, and added, "An' she was funny when she talked about Dr. Grip, just like he was somebody. Mama, let's go to see her now; I believe may be she can make me laugh."

Mrs. Allen was very glad to find that her little man wanted anything, he had been so quiet and had looked so sick.

Then a few days of beautiful spring weather came. The willows and the maples and the poplars began to put on their spring clothes, whether Dr. Grip was there or not, and everybody began to feel better.

So Papa Allen took down his grip flag from the door handle and put up another, and on it was written, "Grandma B.'s Q. P. on Friday evening, 7:30 sharp. By order of the President."

When this flag was discovered there was a great hand-clapping, followed by much diving

down into pockets and looking between leaves of books, and in all sorts of impossible places for the questions that had been given out two weeks before.

Artie's question, and, indeed, several others, could not be found; but grandma had them all down in her little book, and so she easily gave them out again.

"But this is not to encourage you in losing your questions, my dears; it is just because of Dr. Grip—I suppose he is to blame for your losing your grip on your questions. When grandma said this she looked away out of the window, because Papa Allen was there, and he always just whistled when she made a pun.

"Let us have a specially nice evening, daughter. The children have had a hard time, and I don't want the evening to drag."

"Your evenings never drag, Mother Bright, because you love the children and they love you.

Love is the secret of social success, I verily believe."

"Yes, dear, I think you are right; but, you see, Dr. Grip evidently does not care much for love, and he does not approve of planning things, and must have stolen my 'think cap,' for I can't find it, and that is why I feared the evening would be dull."

Mama Allen laughed, for grandma looked so forlorn, and shook her head with such a grippy air that it was hard not to believe her.

Friday evening was lovely. The air was soft and balmy, and as all the answers had been found to the questions, everybody was ready by 7:30 sharp.

The room was full of the scent of violets, and there were several pots of blooming flowers, and everything to make the evening attractive.

"Well, children," began grandma, as she rapped on the table for silence. "I want to say, first, I'm truly glad to see you all again. I'd

much rather entertain you than Dr. Grip, even if he does teach me patience. Has anybody a question to ask before I put mine?"

Mr. Allen's hand was up.

"Well, Papa Allen, what's your question?"

"I just wanted to say that I overheard two boys wondering what kin John Huss was to us Presbyterians."

"I hope you told them, son?"

"No'm—I was—er, an eavesdropper, you see. They didn't see me."

Everybody looked at all the boys, and grandma guessed that it was Jack and Will, and so she said, "Well, I'll tell them right now. John Huss belonged to the Reformed Church of Bohemia."

"Then he was a sort of cousin to our Presbyterian Church," said Jack.

"Yes, yes; and we are very glad to own the relationship. Now, I will begin with my questions. May be we will not finish them all this

evening, for so many interesting things will come up in connection with the subject of our dear old Catechism." Grandma turned to her little book as she finished and read :

"No. 1. Why is our Catechism called the Westminster Catechism?"

Willie Barker answered this question.

"Because it was made by a committee appointed by the Westminster Assembly, which met in Westminster Abbey, London.

"No. 2. What did the Assembly meet there for?"

Sadie found she had the answer to this question.

"The English Parliament called for an 'Assembly of Divines' to meet and help them reorganize the church."

"Why, what was the matter with the church?" grandma asked.

Mr. Allen's hand was up, and Sadie was very glad for him to answer :

"Why, old King James and Charles, and Archbishop Laud had all meddled until they had made a mess of the church affairs. They wanted to force bishops and liturgy on the people, and to have the king as the head of the church. Some of the people preferred to leave their homes and become exiles, and many were discontented and miserable, and Parliament saw trouble brewing for England if something was not done."

"Well," said grandma, "now let's hear when this famous Assembly met?"

Artie held up his hand said very distinctly, "On July 1st, 1643."

"Can some one give the name of the room in Westminster Abbey where they met?"

Mrs. Allen answered:

"The Jerusalem Chamber, which was so called because the walls were hung in earlier days with tapestries that were pictures of the siege of Jerusalem.

"It is a wonderful room, full of many memo-

ries of distinguished people who have either occupied it while living, or whose bodies have lain there in state until they were buried. It was a large, long room, with one large double window, that furnished all the light, and opposite to it a large fireplace with an open grate, and because it was so comfortable the Assembly was glad to meet there instead of going to Henry VII.'s Chapel, as they had been first ordered to."

"Now," said grandma. "I think, as we have all been so grippy lately, that we had better finish up our Q. P. for this evening, leaving the rest of the questions for next Friday. All in favor say 'aye!'"

"Aye!" came up in full chorus. Then Hugh said, "But, grandma, we are interested in the Q. P. Only we don't any of us feel very bright to-night."

Grandma was pleased that Hugh said this, for she was so very anxious for the children to be

really interested in knowing all the interesting things they could find about the Shorter Catechism. She looked at Mr. Allen very hard for a moment, and he said, "Oh, yes'm—I remember," and he went out, and in a few moments returned with a big bag on his back, which he tumbled down at Grandma's feet, and out rolled apples and oranges and grapes and candy, and rolled and scattered, so that in a few minutes there were children scattered everywhere too—under the bed and tables—all over the room, and such a clatter that if Dr. Grip had suddenly come in he would not have recognized his patients.

When the clock hands pointed to 8:55 the mysterious whistle blew, and grandma rapped for quiet and said, "I will give out a question or two more for next time before Sunday; and, now, good-night to you all, and may no more of us be sick."

"Good-night, grandma; good-night!" and the

children were gone, and grandma lay back in her chair, so tired, but with a bright smile on the dear old face. She was so happy to give the children pleasure.

CHAPTER VI.

ALTHOUGH we have not heard from the Q. P's for two weeks, they had their party at the regular time.

Grandma kept her promise of giving out more questions in time for them to be looked up, and here are the questions as she has them written down in her little book :

No. 1. "Who presided at that memorable meeting of the Assembly in the Jerusalem Chamber?"

No. 2. "Were the members all Presbyterians?"

No. 3. "Who were the Puritans, and why did they get their name?"

No. 4. "When did the Assembly meet?"

No. 5. "Who may be called 'the father of the Shorter Catechism?' "

No. 6. "Can you mention some of the distinguished men who were there?"

No. 7. "How long was the Assembly preparing the Catechism?"

No. 8. "What advantage do we think that the Westminster Shorter Catechism has over others?"

At the supper table on Friday evening grandma smiled around the table and said, "I am very impatient for the Q. P. to assemble."

"Why, grandma?" asked Artie.

"Oh! well, partly because the questions are interesting, and then"—here grandma stopped and laughed heartily, but refused to explain. It was no use to beg; nobody could change Grandma Bright's mind after she had said "no."

Grandma's room was beautifully decorated in lovely clusters of wistaria and vases of wall-flowers.

As soon as all the members were present

grandma tapped for silence, and opening her book, said, "Let's get to work. I suppose you all remember the last question of the last party?"

Several hands went up, and all called out, "Yes'm; Mama Allen told us about the Jerusalem Chamber, where the famous Westminster Assembly met."

"Very good, very good." Grandma nodded her head and smiled with satisfaction.

"Now, then, we can proceed with our questions."

"No. 1. Who presided over this memorable Assembly?"

Mrs. Barker answered, "Rev. William Twisse, D.D. He was sixty-eight years old, very learned and very pious; a strong Calvinist, but diffident and absent-minded, and so not very well suited for the duties of his position, except that his fervent prayers twice a day brought God's blessing on it."

"Yes, and if I remember rightly, it was while

he was pleading for a blessing on it, he was seized with his last illness. The next question is, 'Were the members all Presbyterians?' "

"No'm," said Grey. "There were a few Huguenots, and one bishop was present at first. Many were dressed in the caps and gowns of the Church of England priests. There were Puritans there, and Independents, and Scotch Presbyterians."

"Question 3 is, 'Who were the Puritans, and how did they get their name?' "

Lula said at once, "Oh! Grandma Bright, I was glad to know that. When Queen Mary persecuted so many Protestants, many went into exile rather than give up their faith, and when these exiles returned to England, they demanded more purity and simplicity in public worship, and for that they were called Puritans. That was during the reign of Elizabeth, but the name clung to them."

"Next, 'When did the Assembly meet?' "


Artie roused up when he heard that, for he had that question, and the poor little man had a very suspicious look of sleepiness about his eyes when he answered, though his voice sounded very wide awake, "On July 1st, 1643."

Then he looked all around the circle to see if anybody had found out that he was sleepy, but the only two who had noticed it never laughed at Artie, nor allowed others to do so."

"No. 5. Who may be called 'the father of the Shorter Catechism?' "

It was Hugh's turn now:

"Mr. Herbert Palmer, an accomplished scholar, so fluent and graceful in the use of both French and Latin that he carried on all the foreign correspondence of the Assembly. He was rich and loved to spend his money on the education of young men for the ministry. He was chairman of the Committee on the Catechism until his death, and though the finishing touches were put to it by another man, yet when the two



editions are compared we see how much we owe Mr. Palmer."

"No. 6. 'Can you mention some of the distinguished men who were there?'"

"Yes, mam," said Papa Allen, holding up his hand and shaking it as if he was anxious to speak. "I tell you they were men worth knowing. We have a right to be proud of our Confession of faith, and our Catechism too. There was John Selden, the greatest scholar of his age; John Pym, the great Puritan patriot; Francis Rouse, the author of *Rouse's Version of the Psalms*, used by our Scotch forefathers for so many generations. And, by the way, isn't it curious that he was a South of England man, who possibly never was in Scotland, and this *Version of Psalms* was not sung first on the moors of Scotland, but under the fretted arches of a stately English cathedral. There was John Knox, the greatest Scotchman; and Alexander Henderson, and Samuel Rutherford, one of the

most learned men of the day, and George Gillespie, the youngest but foremost of the Scotch members. Altogether, they were a remarkable body of men."

"No. 7. 'How long was the committee in preparing the Catechism?'"

"Five years," said Jack. "Yes, and no wonder," he added, shaking his head. "It's awful, how it takes a fellow five years, most, to learn it, and they ought to have taken as long to make it. No wonder you get a certificate or somethin' when you get through."

Jack had evidently resolved to relieve his mind on the subject of the Shorter Catechism, but he ended by joining in the laugh which his speech created.

Jack Allen belonged to the great army of boys and girls who groan under the burden of learning the Catechism, because they do not realize what store they are laying up for the future.

"Now, just one question more," said grandma.

"What advantage do we think that the Westminster Catechism has over others?"

"Oh! Mother Bright; Mother Bright! You will make us all too bigotty if you ask such a question," exclaimed Mr. Allen. "Not but that I think it does beat all others, however," he added.

Grandma laughed, but she shook her head and said, "I did not ask the question for any reason of that kind. I love too many people who have never learned the Shorter Catechism; but it is one of the facts that I want the dear children to know, and now will somebody answer?"

Mama Allen looked at Nellie, but Nellie said, "Do. Mrs. Allen, say why; I could not find that answer."

And Mrs. Allen said, "All right. Because it is the work, not of one man, as Luther's and Calvin's, nor of two men, as the Heidelberg Catechism was, nor of four, as was the Catechism of the Church of Rome, but the product of some

five years of most earnest and prayerful deliberations of the whole Assembly."

"Now, Papa Allen, that is a simple statement of facts, and facts need not make folks biggotty."

While everybody was laughing grandma took out some slips of paper and rapped for silence.

"Now, everybody come to me and have a Presbyterian name pinned on his back, and each one must guess his own name."

The children stared for a moment or two, but when Papa Allen knelt down at grandma's knee to have his name pinned on they began to see the fun, and my! what a time they had guessing from the questions other people asked.

Some one asked Artie if he was buried in Edinburgh, and when he replied gravely, "I think I must be John Knox," he brought down the house.

"Suppose we go in the dining-room now, and see what we can find."

Of course, everybody was ready to follow grandma, especially this time in the evening.

On the table were a whole lot of covered dishes with labels on them :

OATMEAL PORRIDGE.

SCOTCH HERRINGS.

PRESBYTERIAN PONE.

SCOTCH ROLLS.

SCOTCH CAKE.

PRESBYTERIAN PRANKS.

There was much excitement until the covers were removed, and to the great relief of Artie, who hated oatmeal, that dish was popcorn.

In fact, the whole bill-of-fare might have been headed, "Presbyterian Pranks," for it was Papa Allen's way of playing tricks on them. There was plenty of cakes, candy, and fruit and nuts.

As they went out of the door Mrs. Allen gave each the questions for the next time, and so ended the Sixth Question Party.

CHAPTER VII.

THERE were so many things that Grandma Bright wanted the children to know as Presbyterians, that she decided that it would be better to spend two or three more evenings on the "Westminster Standards," and to talk or question about the good that Presbyterianism has done for the world. And she begged all the honoraries to be sure and come to help her make the evenings entertaining.

We all know that if we have to rub our eyes to keep them open, it is hard to make any one believe that we are interested in what is going on, and sometimes grandma thought she saw some very heavy eyelids at the Q. P's.

Friday evening came flying round, as all the days do in these rushing times, when everybody feels that the train will leave him if he stops a minute.

The windows were all open in grandma's room. The fireplace was filled with a large vase of asparagus. The fragrance of old-fashioned roses and pinks was in the air, and the girls looked like rosebuds themselves in their pretty spring dresses.

Hugh and Will Barker came in together, and grandma heard Hugh say, "I tell you, Will, grandma gave us some pretty hard questions this time!"

"Yes, sir! I just had to look and look, until I was nearly ready to give up; then I turned back to the first chapter of the "Addresses" and found what I had been looking for. I tell you, I was glad."

Grandma turned around quickly and said, "Good for you, my boy! I hope that you will keep on that way in your search for knowledge. So many people just half know things because they are either too lazy to keep on looking for them, or care too little to know anything beyond

what to eat and drink and wear. I do want my boys and girls to be intelligent Presbyterians, and to have a reason for the faith they profess.

By this time the whole of the Q. P. had assembled, even papa and Mama Barker had come and stood at the door "so as not to disturb the preacher," as Mr. Barker said.

"Come in! Come in! We are all ready now, and may be you'll have the very first question to answer," called out grandma. So they all came in in Indian file and sat down in a hurry.

Grandma rapped for silence, fixed her glasses and opened her little Q. P. book.

"We heard last time a great deal that was interesting about the dear old Catechism that we all love to study so well." Grandma looked straight into Jack's eyes with such a comical expression on her face. "And we learned how many distinguished men helped to make it; but the Catechism was not all they made. Can some

one tell me what else that remarkable Westminster Assembly made?"

"The Form of Government, and the Directory for Worship," answered Mrs. Barker. "They worked at these during the first two years of their session. The Directory was really the first finished work of the Assembly. Then they began to work on the Confession of Faith."

"Ah! and now comes our next question," said grandma, looking into her book.

"What do you mean by the Confession of Faith?"

Will Barker was ready to answer that question.

"It is the same as a creed, only is much longer. It is a statement of what we believe about God and his dealings with men."

"What is a creed, and of what use?"

Hugh spoke quickly, "The word creed comes from the Latin *Credo*. In old times they named a religious paper or book from the first word in

it. In the Apostles' Creed the first word is '*Credo*, I believe,' and so they called the whole document the *Credo*.

"The use of a creed is to give us in as few words as possible a statement of what we believe. The Bible says we must be ready to give a reason for the hope that is within us."

"That is a good answer. Well, I am proud of my Q. P.'s, which means this time my Question People."

"Will somebody now tell us something about the most famous creeds?"

Sadie's hand was up.

"Why, people began to form creeds away back not more than a century after the death of Paul; but the first authorized creed was called the Nicene, because it was made at Nicæa. Then, there was the Apostles' Creed, which we use, and another was called the Athanasian Creed. After the Reformation there was the Confession of Augsburg, the creed of the Lutheran Church.

"The Roman Catholics had a creed with a long Latin title that I can't remember. Then, there was the Genevese, and the creed of the French Reformed Church, and the 'Decrees of the Synod of Dort.' Every one of the Reformed churches seemed bound to have a creed. I think it is a pity, grandma, they could not have been satisfied with just one; it would have saved so much trouble." Sadie said this so earnestly that everybody clapped hands. Then Papa Allen said, "It is a pity, but you know everybody likes his own way. However, the Apostles' Creed suits everybody wonderfully well — I mean every orthodox body — and I wish we knew certainly about the man or men who made it."

"Are there any more creeds to be mentioned?" grandma asked.

"Oh! yes," said Sadie, "there are the thirty-nine articles of the Church of England, very much like our Confession of Faith."

"Well, now, to go back to our Confession of Faith, when and where was it written?"

"It was begun in August, 1644, and was presented to Parliament in 1647. It was prepared in the Jerusalem Chamber of Westminster Abbey."

Lilla answered that question. "Thank you! Thank you! Yes, and it was the work of three years of great painstaking. We see, then, that everything the Westminster Assembly did they did prayerfully and carefully. That is a way that all good Presbyterians have, I think, and gives them a reputation for reliability and thrift."

Grandma smiled and gave her head a little satisfied turn that seemed to amuse the "hon-oraries" very much.

"Question No. 7 is, 'What reason have we to be proud of our Confession of Faith, and satisfied with it as it is?' "

Mrs. Allen said, "Mother Bright, I am glad

that question came to me, for I am 'so full of the subject' that I found it hard to wait for my time. We are so justly proud of it because it is founded on the 'impregnable rock of the Holy Scriptures.' There is not a statement made there, nor in our Catechism, that cannot be proved from the Bible, and no wonder that Dr. R. L. Dabney, the greatest mind of the Southern Presbyterian Church, said, 'It is for the reason that the Confession will need no amendment until the Bible needs to be amended.' "

Mrs. Allen's face was flushed with enthusiasm, and her eyes glowed, and all the honoraries, and grandma too, applauded her. Artie waked up and joined in, and when it was all over he asked, "Mama, did you say something very smart or very funny?"

Whereupon, Papa Allen said "it was not only very smart, but very true, and I want to send mama to Presbytery to say it there."

Grandma rapped for silence and then asked,

"Did Presbyterians have much to do with the liberty we enjoy to-day?"

Jack, who had almost worn his patience out waiting, roused up and said, "Yes, m'am! Everywhere people have held this belief they have loved liberty of conscience and of life, and have been willing to fight, and even die for it.

"Presbyterians believe all men are free and equal, and in America it was the strong Presbyterian population that was first to be independent of England.

"The Scotch-Irish of Watauga, N. C., in January, 1775, declared they would not surrender their freedom, but with their lives, and the Scotch-Irish of good old Mecklenburg, N. C., in May, 1775, adopted a Declaration of Independence, which will stand while free institutions endure as a monument to the devotion of Presbyterians to civil liberty and responsible government."

Jack saw everybody getting ready to clap

him, and he added quickly, "I did not make that, grandma. I got it from the Westminster Addresses."

Then everybody shouted, and the boys wanted to shake hands with "Mr. Honesty," who was so afraid we might think he was eloquent.

Grandma rapped twice before they became quiet; then she said, "Now, we will have a song and chorus by Master Artie and all of us."

The song was "Carolina," and dear little Artie's voice never sounded sweeter than that night.

The chorus must have startled the neighborhood, for everybody sang as loud as he or she could.

"Now, my dears, suppose we go into the dining-room. I heard a stirring about in there, and Mama Allen is missing, which looks suspicious."

The whole crowd cried "Aye!" and grandma led the way with Artie; and, sure enough, they

found a lovely strawberry treat waiting for them.

In the middle of every saucer of berries was stuck what looked like a little white flag, but proved to be questions for next time.

There was a large vase of roses in the centre of the table, and all kinds of cakes were plentiful, and you can guess what a merry ending there was to that sober Q. P.

Papa Allen said, "Mother Bright, you must call your meetings Grandma Bright's Questions Party."

Artie laughed, and then he said, "Well, papa, it does make your head feel better to eat something after those questions, I think."

Grandma stooped over and kissed his brow, and then the whistle sounded, and Question Party No. 7 was over.

The children said good-bye, and soon everybody was in Sleepy Land.

CHAPTER VIII.

ALMOST all of the members of Grandma Bright's Q. P's were gathered under the beautiful old elm tree in the Allens' yard. It was not very far from grandma's room, and as the window was up, she could not help hearing what they were saying.

"I don't like these Q. P's as much as I did 'Guessing at Heroes.' It is harder to find out what grandma means, and some of it is awfully dry." (Hugh would scarcely have said "awfully" if he had known that grandma was hearing what he said, for he knew how she disliked the word used in that way.)

Grandma listened very eagerly for the reply.

"Why, Hugh," said Sadie, who was a year older than the others, and felt very superior, "you can't expect church history to be funny. These are things we have to know if we want

to be good Presbyterians, and I am sure the endings of our Q. P's are not dry."

Hugh knew Sadie was right; but he was a boy, and he did not want a girl to come preaching to him just because she happened to be a year older, so he said, "Well, for all that, the answers are dry and hard to find, and you know it."

Grandma was just a little bit worried when Hugh said that, but she thought, "Well, this is one of the cases where there is truth on both sides; but I know the children will thank me some day for the Q. P's, even if they do seem dry now."

Just then Jack and Will came up, and Will said, "I tell you, grandma's Q. P's helped me in Sunday-school yesterday. My teacher asked a whole lot of questions about the Catechism, and I was the only boy who could answer them, because none of the other boys belong to the Q. P's."

Will made his last assertion as if there was no doubt about the matter, and grandma, inside the window, smiled and nodded her head, and said to herself, "There now!"

"Well, I think if we are really proud of being Presbyterians we want to know all about our church, and if the questions are hard, I'm glad to come to anything Grandma Bright has, always." Lula said this with a very decided nod of her head.

Then there was a perfect chorus of "That's so's," and Artie clapped his hands and cried, "Me too!"

It was a pity that they couldn't have seen grandma as she sat behind the half-closed blinds.

Well, Friday evening came round at last, and the weather was so warm that Q. P's must assemble in the big broad hall, where there was plenty of room and air.

"I think I will suspend the Q. P's after next

Friday. There are a few things more that I do want my children to know before they scatter for the summer."

Everybody was willing to come once more, but everybody was also willing to take a vacation during the hot summer months.

"It is well you are willing, my dears," said Papa Allen, "for if you didn't you would either have to be packed in ice or taken away in buckets." Which speech Artie applauded vigorously, for he always thought everything his father said was funny.

Grandma tapped with the handle of her fan and called the meeting to order; then asked Question No. 1, "What else did that remarkable Westminster Assembly make besides the Directory of Worship, the Confession of Faith and the Shorter Catechism?"

"They made the Larger Catechism, that has all the Bible texts to prove what our Catechism teaches. It's awfully long, grandma, and I sup-

pose they just made it for the preachers to study."

Will Barker said this as if he wanted to dismiss the subject in a hurry, and it amused everybody.

"No, indeed, my dear! Why, it was only a few weeks ago that I noticed the name of a girl in the *Standard* who had committed it all to memory."

Such a chorus of "Ohs!" as followed. It was evident that none of the members of grandma's Q. P's were ready to be "honorably mentioned" for reciting the Larger Catechism yet.

"I have known several people myself who learned it all and survived," said Mrs. Allen.

"I would never!" observed Jack, very earnestly. Jack was not gifted with what is known as a good memory.

"Well, my boy, if you do not try now to cultivate your memory you will be sorry for it when you are old; I know that."

Jack knew that grandma knew what she was talking about, and he almost resolved to begin to train his memory. But Jack was like a good many other people we all know. It took him a long time to carry out his resolves.

"Now," said grandma, "we have a very interesting question, 'Who were the Covenanters?'"

"It was the name given to those people in Scotland who signed the National Covenant," said Nellie Barker.

"And what was the National Covenant? That is the next question."

"I have the answer to that, grandma," said Grey. "The National Covenant was a pledge written in 1580 by John Craig, the chaplain of King James VI., and signed by the King. It was first called 'the King's Confession,' but the name was changed afterward to the National Covenant."

"Well, and what was the object of the pledge? Lula, I think you look as if you had the answer to that question."

"Yes'm, you are right. It was a pledge of faithfulness to the Reformed religion in Scotland. The people who signed it promised to adhere to the true religion, and to use all lawful means to recover the purity and liberty of the gospel, which had been taken from them when Charles tried to force Episcopacy upon them. On the 28th of February, 1638, after a powerful sermon by Alexander Henderson, in Greyfriar's church, in Edinburgh, thousands of people signed the Covenant in the graveyard, using tombstones for writing tables, and it is said that some drew blood from their arms to use instead of ink."

"Yes, and it cost many of them their heart's blood afterwards," added grandma. "And, now, what was the Solemn League and Covenant?"

Mrs. Allen said, "I think we are all indebted to the Solemn League and Covenant for our Confession of Faith, Directory of Worship and Catechisms, for the object of this League and

Covenant was to secure the same religious worship in England and Ireland as in Scotland. They wanted to drive out popery and prelacy, and to have peace in the kingdom. They wanted to defend the king's person, authority and honor, so we see they had a noble purpose. But the trouble here was that the house was divided against itself—that is, the Assembly that was called to arrange these matters was divided. There were Episcopalians, Independents and Presbyterians. And they all differed about the government of the church. Of course, the Presbyterians believed in religious liberty.”

Grandma held up her hand just then and called out, “Stop! stop! You are taking the answer to No. 9.” Then she read the question, “What do Presbyterians believe about church government?”

“They believe that Jesus Christ is the only Head of the church, and that no king, or pope, or president, has the right to control its affairs.

And they were willing to lay down their lives by the thousands for the cause of religious liberty." Nellie Barker answered that question.

Then Mr. Barker said, "Mother Bright, I want our Q. P's to read and learn all they can about the Covenanters and their noble struggle. Some of the best Scotch stories have their scenes laid in those exciting days.

"I hope that if any of them travel in Scotland they will be sure to go, as I did, to the Martyr's monument, in old Greyfriar's church-yard, in Edinburgh, and see where the bones of some of the eighteen thousand martyrs that yielded up their lives lay. 'Noblemen, gentlemen, ministers and others—all noble martyrs for Jesus Christ.' I tell you, boys and girls, we have a right to be proud of being kin to those grand old Covenanters."

"Yes," said Papa Allen, "for religious liberty would have perished in Great Britain if they had been wholly crushed."

Grandma blew her whistle, and Mr. Allen looked at her, and then at the dining-room door, for it opened, and what a pretty sight was there!

Ice-cream and cake and candy, and a large vase of flowers in the centre of the table.

The ice-cream was served in pretty paper baskets. On the handle of each was a question for next time, and in the centre of the vase of flowers was a large card, and on it was written, "Be prepared for Review Questions next time."

Artie waked up, and Jack pushed around, and all the Q. P's were busy and happy, and so ended the eighth Q. P.

CHAPTER IX.

AN EVENING WITH THE COVENANTERS.

FOR several reasons it had been necessary to postpone the last Q. P. of the season for two weeks.

In the meanwhile grandma made a little visit to her daughter Lucy, whose home was in the country, not far away.

"Your Aunt Lucy is a great woman to find old books and to collect old stories, and I believe that she will be able to give me something about the Covenanters so old that it will seem quite new to you young folks."

Sure enough, when grandma came back she held up some forlorn, faded little books and said, "Ah! I have made a rich find, or your Aunt Lucy has, I would better say."

The Allen children all looked very knowing,

but were prudently silent, except Artie, who ran round and round grandma, clapping his hands and crying, "I know somfin' too! I do! I do!"

The fact was that while grandma was away Mrs. Allen had called a council of the Q. P's, and had unfolded the plan of a pleasant surprise for her.

They were all highly delighted, and willingly helped to get up a Scotch evening.

Grandma had wisely left her question book, so that the careless ones who had mislaid their questions might be able to find them there.

"I think the honoraries must do their full share of the work," grandma said, looking at Papa Allen; "therefore, you must be prepared to sing a Scotch song, or relate some story of the 'Great Killing time.'"

"Oh! yes'm, I will sing with pleasure," replied Mr. Allen quite promptly. This remark caused much laughter, as Mr. Allen had never been known to turn a tune in his life.

Friday evening came at last. Grandma had consented to hold the last Q. P. of the season in the parlor, as all the papas and mamas and big sisters were to be invited.

She had on her handsome black silk dress and a pretty cap, and sat smiling and lovely as she waited for the guests.

"Where are all the young people, and what is all that noise on the back porch?" grandma asked of Mr. Allen, as she passed by the door, but before Mrs. Allen could reply the bell rang, and in a moment here came Mrs. Barker and all the other company.

"Come in! come in!" called grandma cordially, and giving a warm hand-clasp to each one, but she wondered why she was the only one here to greet them.

"Where are all the children?" she asked, looking anxiously beyond the grown-ups to the hall door.

"Why, they came a half hour ago," exclaimed Mrs. Barker.

"They did!" Grandma was puzzled, and began to feel left out. There was something going on that she knew nothing of.

While the shadow of this thought was resting on her face, there came the sound of a flute, accompanied by a good deal of tramping and laughing, and then!—

Up the hall came Mr. Barker, with a Scotch cap on his head and a plaid scarf across his shoulders, and playing on his flute "The Campbells are Coming."

Behind him marched Artie, bearing a blue banner, with the motto of the Covenanters, "For Christ's Crown and Covenant." He was dressed in full Scotch costume, and certainly made a lovely little Scotchman.

The others followed, marching two and two, the girls in white, with plaided scarfs, and blue ribbon snoods, and the boys with scarfs and caps of blue.

Mr. and Mrs. Allen brought up the rear.

Grandma's face was wreathed in smiles by the time they were all inside the room, and she clapped them loudly.

"Grammar," said Artie, getting close up to her, "are you 'sprized—eh! Grammar?"

"Of course I am, and so delighted and so proud of my children," said grandma, giving Artie such a squeeze that the banner was in danger of trailing in the dust.

"Mother Bright, as the exercises of the evening will be very long, we had better begin promptly," said Mr. Allen, and grandma nodded and took up her question book, and, rapping for silence, said, "Now, children, if you had not had my book while I was gone I would feel a little uneasy about this review. I believe in reviews, you know, and now I think that may be everybody will get a prize."

Hugh and Grey and Mason nodded their heads very doubtfully, for the boys had baseball on the brain just now, and had not culti-

vated a very intimate acquaintance with the question book.

"I shall give out a question, and all who know the answer will please hold their right hands up high. Then I will choose some one to give it, and will expect the others to correct any mistake that may be made."

"What does Presbyterianism mean?"

All hands were up quickly, though Jack's and Nellie Barker's were not very high.

Artie looked very important when grandma called on him to answer, and he did it so well that all the grown-ups applauded him.

"Who were the Waldenses, and where did they live?"

Several hands were up promptly, and grandma selected Sadie to answer, and she told in a few words just what was needed. Then grandma asked, "Are there any Waldenses in America?"

Hugh and Grey and Mason and the girls were

all ready to answer, and Lula said, "Why, yes'm, right here in North Carolina. Last summer, while I was in the mountains, a Waldensian brought grapes to the hotel every day. There is a colony in Burke county."

"Very good. Now, who were some of the men who have helped to build up the church that we all love?"

"Oh! grandma," exclaimed Jack, "I forgot to look up the answer to that question."

As there were several hands up, grandma thought she would ask each in turn. She called on Hugh. He mentioned Calvin, Knox and Alexander Henderson.

Mason added George Gillespie, and Lula Samuel Rutherford. Sadie's hand was still up. Then grandma nodded to her, and she said, "John Calvin, who was a Frenchman; John Knox, a true Scotchman, at whose grave the regent said, 'Here lieth the body of one who never feared the face of man;' Patrick Hamil-

ton, who was burnt at the stake when only twenty-four years old; Alexander Henderson, an eloquent and faithful preacher; Samuel Rutherford, who is best known as the author of a book of letters; and George Gillespie, the youngest member of the remarkable Westminster Assembly, from whose prayer was taken the answer to the question, 'What is God?' "

This carefully prepared answer pleased grandma very much, and she nodded and smiled at Sadie until the rosy blushes came.

"Why is our Catechism called the Westminster Assembly's Catechism?"

"Oh! I know; I know!" cried Artie, holding his hand up very high. He had felt rather snowed under so far, and grandma was glad to give him a chance, so she counted the hands that were up and then let Artie answer, which he did very correctly.

"What celebrated room did the Westminster

Assembly meet in?" All but three hands were up, and Mason answered this question.

"How long was the Assembly in preparing the Shorter Catechism?" Three hands were held up—Hugh's, Lula's and Sadie's. The other boys and Nellie just looked puzzled and surprised.

One more review question was asked: "What else besides the Confession of Faith and the Catechisms did that remarkable Assembly make?"

Sadie led every time, and the flush was deepening on her cheek, as the eyes of all the company was turned on her.

"Now comes a new question that was given out at the last Q. P." When grandma said that there was quite a stir, and everybody looked relieved "Who were the Covenanters?"

Mr. Allen's hand was up now, and he said in a comical tone of distress, "Please, ma'm, won't you let a poor honorary have a wee bit of a

chance now? The bairns are going to get all of the candy."

Grandma was laughing so that she could only nod "yes," and Mr. Allen said, "They were those who signed the National Covenant, first known as 'the King's Confession.' It was written by John Craig, the chaplain of King James VI., and was a pledge of faithfulness to the Reformed religion in Scotland."

"When did thousands of people sign it?"

Jack had the answer to that question. "On the 28th of February, 1638, in Greyfriar's church, Edinburgh, and some of them, it was said, drew blood from their arms to use instead of ink."

"What other celebrated Covenant was there?"

Will Barker held up his hand and answered, "The Solemn League and Covenant."

"What King signed it?"

Mr. Barker answered, "Prince Charlie, to whom they had been so loyal. They proclaimed



him king, and though he signed this covenant, he did not mean it, for he forced Episcopacy on them, and a bitter persecution followed."

"How many were supposed to have suffered during the twenty-eight years of persecution?"

Mrs. Allen had the answer to this question.

"Why, in one way or another, fully eighteen thousand. They were tortured, burnt at the stake, beheaded, hacked to pieces with the sword, shot down in their own homes and on the lonely moors, when they were in hiding, and some died from exposure, and others from long confinement in filthy prisons, and some in exile."

Mrs. Allen spoke with so much spirit that you might have thought she had been an eye-witness of some, at least, of the cruelties. Everybody felt roused and interested.

Then grandma said, "I can see, daughter, that you have been reading some of the little books I brought with me."

"Yes, indeed! most of us have dipped into

the curious old books, whose very mouldiness and quaint diction make them seem more real, though, of course, they have not the charm of such books as *Men of the Moss' Hags* or *The Standard Bearer*."

"That's so! that's so" was grandma's eager reply. "And now I have one more question to ask, and then we shall have a few incidents that will give us some idea of life 'in the Great Killing times.' 'How many ministers were turned out of their parishes?'"

Sadie, who had shown so much interest from the first Q. P., held up her hand now.

"There were about four hundred who were thrust out in the severe winter weather. They were forbidden to hold services under penalty of death. Nobody was allowed in any way to assist them or to supply their wants. But they found many sympathizers and many devoted fellow-Christians, and from the desolate moors and wild glens there often came the sound of

prayer and praise. Sometimes they gathered when the snow was on the ground."

Grandma was nodding her head in approval of Sadie's answer. Then she asked for some incidents.

The boys seemed quite interested now, and plainly had something to tell.

Of course, it would have taken half the night if everybody had related a story.

Will, can you give us some short story that will give an idea of the life of the Covenanters?"

Will was startled by being called on first, but soon recovered himself and read this anecdote, which he had copied:

"One minister, who was greatly beloved and respected, named Peden, was out in hiding. At one time, when he and a few friends were pursued by a company of dragoons, they found that their hope of escape was almost cut off. He knelt down among the heather and prayed, 'Twine them about the hill, Lord, and cast the

lap of thy cloak over old Sandy and these poor things, and we will all keep it in remembrance and tell it to the commendation of thy goodness and pity.'

"He had no sooner finished and risen from his knees than dense volumes of snow-white mist came rolling down from the mountain top and completely hid them from their pursuers. And that wasn't the only time God hid his people that way, either."

"That is very interesting, and what a quaint, simple prayer the dear old preacher made!" said grandma, smiling, yet with the tears in her eyes.

"Well, Mason, can you give us one now?"

"Yes'm. There was a man named Welsh, that ran to a house when the troopers were after him, and sat down by the fire, expecting to be taken. The soldiers came in, shouting; but as they had never seen Welsh, they did not think this man dozing over the fire could be him. The mistress of the house just then gave him a heavy

slap over the shoulder, scolding him for neglecting his work and being so lazy; so the soldiers thought he was only a servant and went off. He often said the kindest cuff he ever received was from the gude wife of Carterhope, for it saved his life."

"Now, Lula, let us hear from you."

"Mine is a sad story, grandma. It is the story of Margaret Wilson, a girl only eighteen years old, who was drowned at a stake in the sea near Wigton. There was an old lady sentenced at the same time, and at first they were put in prison to see if they would not take the test oath; but neither of them thought of it, and both cheerfully accepted their doom.

"The old woman's stake was put further out, because the soldiers felt just enough sorry for Margaret to hope that she would be terrified into taking the oath when she saw the other die; but she never wavered, and when she was tied to the stake she sang a part of the twenty-fifth

Psalm, then read the eighth chapter of Romans, and then prayed. While she was praying the water covered her; but before she was dead they pulled her up, and some one begged her to say, 'God save the king!' She answered firmly, 'God save him if he will.' And some people begged the soldiers to take her out. But she still refused to take the oath, and said, 'I am one of Christ's children. Let me go! let me go!' Then they pushed her down into the water, and she was drowned."

This sad story cast a shadow on all the faces, and there was silence in the room. Then grandma said, "Such a story as that makes us feel as if being Christians now-a-days was an easy thing." She looked around on the bright young faces and thought, what if these had been put to such a test!

"Well," said Mr. Allen, "I believe that there is still a plenty of Scotch pluck left in the world, though, of course, our luxurious living may have

robbed us of the brains and the brawn of our forefathers; but I thank God we will not be put to such a test in this 'sweet land of liberty.' ”

Grandma, I have a story to tell that shows the meanness, and the cruelty of Claverhouse,” said Jack.

“And who was Claverhouse?” asked grandma.

“Why, he led the king's dragoons against the Covenanters. His whole name was John Graham, of Claverhouse. He was handsome and smart, but cruel and mean.”

“And cowardly,” added Mr. Barker, “for nobody that is cruel and mean is truly brave.”

“Well, Jack, give us your story; it is getting late.”

“There was a man named Gavin, who had to hide from the dragoons, for they suspected him. He had a little dog that followed him everywhere to keep watch for him. Gavin was lying asleep in a cave, and the dog beside him. When

the soldiers drew near the dog heard them and ran out and began to bark.

"The troopers said at once, 'There must be somebody hiding near,' and so they kept on following the little dog as he would run back a little way, then turn and bark. At last they found the cave and Gavin fast asleep, and the dog licking his hand. They seized him and carried him off to Claverhouse, who seemed to be in a good humor, for he said, 'I will spare your life;' but just as soon as he said that he turned to a dragoon and said, 'Crop off his ears with his big shears.' Gavin was a tailor, and had his shears with him. The trooper took the shears and cut his ears close to his head, and after that the Council exiled him to the island of Barbadoes."

When Jack had finished, Mr. Allen looked at his watch and nodded to Mrs. Barker and Mrs. Allen, and they left the room.

Then Hugh went to grandma and whispered

something, and grandma said, "All right," and she rapped and said, "There will be time for one more short story, I believe. Grey, can't you give us one?"

"I have one I thought funny and interesting because it shows how watchful the Covenanters had to be and how quick to be prepared.

"There was a man named William Swan, a devoted Covenanter. He had about twenty of the sufferers hidden behind some hay in his barn. His wife told him one day that the dragoons were coming, and he began at once to think of some way to save his friends.

He had a large quantity of wool piled in the barn opposite to where the men were hid. He took his wife there and explained to her, so that they could hear, how he was going to act. He would pretend to be scolding her when the soldiers came about some wool that he missed.

"As soon as he heard the clatter of the horses' feet on the rocky pavement outside, he said to

her, 'I will not permit even you, my wife, to set a foot on the floor of my barn while there is any wool there. Take that and be gone!' he said, throwing a fleece of wool at her and pushing her out. Then he closed the door violently and locked it, exclaiming, 'Let me see any one dare to enter this barn without my permission.'

The soldiers were amused, and astonished too, and marched off without searching or questioning Swan."

While everybody was smiling at the clever trick of William Swan, Mr. Allen shook his head and said, "Well, well! if I fooled anybody that way, I wonder if people would praise me? It seems to me that Mr. Swan acted a story!"

"Oh! no; Oh! no," came from several voices, and grandma said, "Ah! we cannot judge the man. In those days of terrible emergencies, when men's lives seemed to hang by threads, and they were in the power of unscrupulous and cruel men, we cannot blame them for resorting

to all kinds of ways of saving life. We know, too, that when these failed they faced death like heroes and Christians."

While grandma was talking so eloquently, Artie, who had followed his mother out of the parlor, came to the door, and taking off his cap and bowing, said, "Ladies and gentlemen, everybody, please come to the dining-room."

Mr. Barker sprang up, and took his flute and stepped into the hall.

Mr. Linlow, Grey's father, was just going forward to offer his arm to Grandma Bright, when Artie called out eagerly, "No, no sir! please don't do that. That's my only dear gramma. I'm jus' 'bliged to take her myself!"

Amidst a burst of laughter, Mr. Linlow begged pardon and gave place to Artie.

By this time Mr. Barker, who was trying to make his flute sound like a bagpipe, marched forward, and grandma and Artie headed the procession to the dining-room.

And how lovely everything looked! There were so many flowers all about the room, and on everybody's plate there was a name card, with a Scotch thistle tied to it by ribbon.

Grandma was asked to take the head of the table, and Mr. Allen the foot. Mrs. Allen and Mrs. Barker, with Lula and Nellie to help them, waited on the company.

When they had all found their places and were seated, there was a rap on the table, and grandma opened her little book and said, "I have here a careful record of all the questions, and of those who knew them and gave the best answers; and I find that Miss Sadie Garland's hand was up every time, and that she answered most correctly, therefore, it is with pleasure that I give her the prize."

As she said this she lifted a dish cover from a pretty waiter all decked in flowers, and there was a pretty Scotch-plaid box, filled with candy and tied with blue ribbon.

It was passed down the table to Sadie amid much applause, and with smiles and blushes she bowed gracefully, and said, "Oh! thank you very much, Grandma Bright."

Grandma was especially gratified to see how pleased all the members of the Q. P. were. If any one was disappointed, there was no sign of it on the bright faces, and while they chatted and guessed riddles, and laughed, and feasted on the delicious refreshments, dear old grandma beamed on them happier than any queen.

Presently Mr. Allen called out, "Mother Bright, this little boy has a speech to make. Please call the party to order." He pointed to Mr. Barker, who hung his head, and put his finger to his mouth, then rose, and amid a merry burst of laughter he began to speak.

"Dear Mother Bright, you'd scarce expect one of my age to speak in public—ah!—ah!—at a party; but all these children want me to thank you for the great institution—the Question Party!

"The big children are more thankful, may be, than the smaller fellows, for while they have found out how ignorant and how rusty they have been, and how they have neglected to teach their children what all true Presbyterian boys and girls ought to know about the dear old mother church, they have really enjoyed brushing up, and have been highly entertained too. And they feel that their Presbyterianism, like the old elm tree in the back yard, is putting out a new growth. And we say with all our hearts, Long live grandma, and may her shadow never grow less!"

All the boys and girls cheered and clapped, and Artie, whose delight could no longer be restrained, climbed to his favorite position on the back of grandma's chair, and gave her a series of hugs that certainly increased the warmth of her affection this June night.

"Hurrah for g'amma! hurrah! She's the greates' g'amma in the 'Nited States!"

When he had subsided grandma said, "I thank you! I thank you, one and all. It has been a great pleasure to me, and if it makes my dear children love our dear old church, and revere the memories of our grand old Covenanter ancestry, I will be fully repaid. And now let us all stand and sing, 'My Country, 'Tis of Thee,' and then the Q. P's will be suspended, at least for the summer."

Just then Mrs. Allen distributed some little flags to all. Artie took his blue banner and raised it, and as they all stood and sang the grand old hymn, they waved the Stars and Stripes all the while.

It was a pretty scene; a scene none of those present would ever forget.

And so ended Grandma Bright's Q. P's for that season.



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